



Town of Ridgefield
Board of Selectpersons Special Meeting Minutes
UNAPPROVED

January 6, 2025 at 12:00pm

Please note – these minutes are not verbatim.

Present: Sean Connelly, Maureen Kozlark, Barbara Manners, Rudy Marconi, Chris Murray

Rudy Marconi shared the purpose of the meeting is for the Board of Selectpersons (BOS) to send a recommendation to the Board of Finance (BOF) for three separate projects. Mr. Marconi shared they have been working on the Police/Fire Public Safety Building (PSB) since 2019. Mr. Marconi shared the BOS recently received a proposal from Daniel Mann to sell 66 Grove Street to the Town.

- 1. Discuss and Possibly Set a Referendum Date for Various Capital Projects:**
 - a. **Police/Fire Public Safety Building**
 - b. **Roofs**
 - c. **Alternative/Transition Program Building**

Maureen Kozlark asked about firm numbers for the projects. Jacob Muller, Director of Public Works & Facilities, shared they have a solid estimate for the PSB from an outside estimating firm. For the roof project, Mr. Muller has received estimates for the Ridgebury Elementary School (RES) roof and is putting together a package for the next few roofs, including one section at Ridgefield High School. For the A-School/Transition Program Building (ATPB), Mr. Muller shared they have received a site estimate for improvements and a construction estimate.

Mr. Muller distributed a document to the BOS about the PSB, outlining the project estimate (\$77M), construction estimate, FF&E (furniture, fixtures & equipment), an allowance for tower communication, construction management fees, and architecture fees. Mr. Muller shared FF&E and construction management fees are industry standard estimates, 2.5% and 3%, respectively. Chris Murray asked whether the construction management fee is standard or negotiated. Mr. Muller confirmed negotiated, but 3% is the industry standard.

Sean Connelly asked about previous architectural fees approval. Mr. Muller confirmed ~\$360,000 was approved for schematic design work in FY2021, and the budget provided is for architectural bid documents. Ms. Kozlark asked about timeline. Mr. Muller confirmed construction would begin in FY2026. Mr. Connelly asked about grants. Mr. Marconi shared they weren't awarded the CDS grant (\$10M), but could reapply, and shared there are no other active grant applications.

Barbara Manners asked about contractor fees, and what percentage is due to the site itself. Mr. Muller shared sitework is ~\$11M of the \$77M project. Ms. Manners asked about costs if the PSB were built at a different site. Mr. Muller shared they explored other sites in Town, but this location (36 Old Quarry Road) was the only one that met the needs for the combined building.

Ms. Kozlark asked about value engineering. Mr. Muller shared yes, the rifle range was removed (~\$5M), and a proposed bridge connecting the second story with the parking area was also removed. Mr. Muller shared they could have another discussion.

Ms. Kozlark expressed the Town needs the PSB, and if this project is not approved by the public, funds will still need to be spent to address immediate needs of both the FD and PD. Mr. Connelly voiced BOS has confidence in the PSB proposal being the right thing for the Town. Mr. Marconi shared, as a municipality, we have the responsibility to invest in infrastructure like this.

Mr. Murray asked whether Kevin Redmond, Finance Director, ran a proforma on the debt service for the PSB project. Mr. Marconi confirmed, and shared it was roughly \$400-\$500 per household.

Mike Rettger, Board of Finance Vice Chair, shared the BOF has an extensive capital forecast model, and have built in a debt service schedule based on a \$75M budget. Mr. Rettger shared the BOF will update their model based on information from this meeting and other information that gets passed along to the BOF. Mr. Rettger shared their next regular meeting is January 21, 2025, and they plan to have the PSB on the agenda.

Ms. Manners asked about alternatives, should the Town not support the PSB proposal. Mr. Muller shared the existing PD and FD roofs would need repairs, as well as addressing drainage and ADA compliance concerns, which would be extensive and expensive. Ms. Kozlark also noted the lack of space at the existing FD.

Ms. Kozlark asked if the all projects were approved, when would the work start. Mr. Muller shared they first have ~6 months of permitting and design work. Mr. Muller confirmed the RES roof was quoted to replace the gym portion during the April Break, and the rest of the roof in the summertime.

Mr. Muller distributed packets for the roof project, which has a proposed \$12.3M budget, starting with RES. Mr. Connelly asked about bundling roofs for better rates. Mr. Muller confirmed they went through Omnia Partners to lock in the materials price, all roofs would be completed at prevailing wage, and the roofs would go to bid within Omnia Partners. Mr. Murray asked about the premium on prevailing wage. Mr. Muller confirmed 18-20%.

Ms. Kozlark asked about the RES roof. Mr. Muller shared the quote (\$2.6M) is for the entire roof, and both Veteran's Park and Scotland Elementary Schools are also quoted for new roofs. Ridgfield High School and East Ridge Middle School are quoted for partial roofs. Mr. Murray asked whether this is all summer work. Mr. Muller confirmed yes, and over multiple summers, ideally completing two roofs in the same summer by working with multiple crews.

Mr. Muller distributed packets for the A-School/Transition Program Building (ATPB), which is currently quoted at \$3.79M for sitework building construction estimates. Mr. Connelly asked about FF&E. Mr. Muller shared RPS would manage the security, furniture, apparatus,

networking, etc. Ms. Manners asked about value engineering. Mr. Muller shared the project has been estimated as designed. Mr. Murray asked whether the estimate includes parking. Mr. Muller confirmed yes, as required by the special permit application.

Mr. Murray raised the offer from Daniel Mann to purchase 66 Grove Street. Mr. Murray shared that scenario makes sense if the BOS and BOE felt 8,000sqft would be inadequate long-term. Mr. Murray shared if they were to explore that scenario, it would need to be at the BOE's request.

Mr. Rettger asked whether the motion tonight would be to move forward for approval and bonding, or for an informal review by the BOF. Mr. Marconi confirmed to move the projects forward and proceed with necessary bonding. Mr. Rettger shared projects of this magnitude would be bonded and not come out of reserve or operating capital, and requested the BOF receive bond council language, as necessary.

The BOS discussed how to proceed. Mr. Connelly asked whether each project should be listed separately or all together. Mr. Murray and Ms. Manners voiced support for three separate questions, and Ms. Manners suggested waiting until the Budget Referendum. Ms. Kozlark shared there's a justification to vote on these sooner, and expressed support for having them in one referendum, which Mr. Connelly supported. Mr. Marconi shared the referendum could potentially be on February 25, 2025.

Daniel Mann, 66 Grove Street, thanked the BOS for reading their proposal, and shared he'd talk with his partners, but could likely make ~\$200/sqft work for a purchase price (~\$3M). Mr. Mann shared 66 Grove Street is cashflow positive from the downstairs tenants.

Dwayne Escola, 52 Catoonah Street, asked whether there has been any consideration to make both the PSB and ATPB net-zero, with sufficient solar panels to power the building each year, and distributed documents to the BOS about net-zero buildings. Mr. Marconi shared it was discussed, but not currently included in the proposal.

Kirk Carr, 62 Prospect Ridge, shared he appreciated the opportunity to make a public comment, but per CT1-225d, items cannot be added to a Special Meeting Agenda.

Chris Murray motioned to send all three Capital Project requests (Police/Fire Public Safety Building, Roofs, and Alternative High School & Transition Program Building) to the Board of Finance for approval and bonding, with a possible Referendum on February 25, 2025, pending Board of Finance approval. Sean Connelly seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

2. Executive Session: Discussion of Possible Open Space Purchase

Maureen Kozlark motioned to enter an Executive Session at 1:01pm. Chris Murray seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

3. Possible Votes

There were no further votes.

Maureen Kozlark motioned to adjourn the meeting at 1:43pm. Chris Murray seconded. Motion carried 5-0.